

## **WT Docket No. 05-235; FCC 05-143**

In the matter of WT Docket No. 05-235; FCC 05-143 the proposed elimination of the requirement to pass a telegraphy examination to obtain and class of Amateur Radio License:

It would seem the Federal Communications Commission does not have a clear purpose or understanding of what Amateur Radio is or should be.

During the 1960s it was clear from the commissions actions on incentive licensing that Amateur Radio was to be an unpaid reserve pool of highly skilled communications and technical experts who could be counted upon to provide emergency communications in times of dire need with the absolute minimal resources. Also their experimentation would enhance the knowledge base of the science of radio communication.

During the 1980s until present it would seem the commission desires to morph Amateur Radio in to a third "Citizens Band / Family Radio" type service. Testing changed from understanding of the technical information presented to memorizing answers to specific questions. Telegraphy was changed from accuracy to minimal comprehension. The integrity of the testing was lowered from the FCC field office and retaking a test every 30 days to volunteer examiners giving tests over and over all day long to the same applicant until they passed.

In the times in which we live; terrorism, cataclysmic storms, earthquakes etc. it would seem that the commission is failing the general public in not insuring a reliable resource of skilled technical and communications experts. With testing at the level that it is, most Extra Class licensee's can barely hook up their equipment if it requires more than plugging something in to the electrical outlet. There will not be much to furthering of the radio art. Requiring an Extra Class Applicant to pass a 5 word per minute code test that is presently multiple choice and requires that only 30 percent of the characters be copied correctly as the answers can be guessed does not seem to be an impediment. On the contrary insuring an introduction to a skill that can be utilized in an emergency situation when carrier only communication is the only source available would seem to be highly desirable.

I urge the commission to keep the present Morse code examination for Extra Class applicants and re-examine its plan for the future of Amateur Radio. Do we need a million people who can simply turn on a switch and talk on a radio or would we be better off with a few hundred thousand who can enhance the future of radio communications and provide emergency communication and technical expertise. For the former they can use the present Citizen services and Cellular Telephones for the latter we need to insure that we have this resource in the event of a national emergency. The recent storms in the gulf coast region have taught us that Government can not go it alone they need the help of the American Citizen.

Roy T. Benjamin, W2CEE  
16 Wintermute Road  
Newton, NJ 07860

W2CEE @ ARRL.NET